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- I. *A Description of the Moose-Deer in America.*
By the Honourable Paul Dudley, Esq; F. R. S.
Communicated by John Chamberlayne, Esq;

AMong other things the *Royal Society* have had from *America*, I find, in Mr. *Lowthorp's* *Abstract* of the *Philosoph. Transact.* a short Account of the Moose, taken from Mr. *Joselyn's* History of *New England*, but in my opinion so imperfect, that I shall not scruple to present you with the Natural History of that fine Creature, partly from my own Knowledge, and partly from the Information of Men of Ingenuity and Probity, that are better acquainted with it.

The Moose is a Creature, not only proper, but it is thought peculiar, to North *America*, and one of the noblest Creatures of the Forest; the *Aborigines* have given him the Name of *Moose*, *Mooseuk* in the Plural.

Of Moose there are two sorts, the *Common light grey Moose*, by the *Indians* called *Wampoos*; these are more like the ordinary Deer, spring like them, and herd sometimes to thirty in a Company. And then there are the *large, or black Moose*, of which I shall now give you the following Account.

First, That he is the Head of the Deer-kind, has many things in Common with other Deer, in many

ny things differs, but in all very superiour. The Moose is made much like a Deer, parts the Hoof, chews the Cudd, has no Gall, his Fars large and erect. The Hair of the black Moose is a dark Grey, and upon the Ridge of his Back to ten and twelve Inches long, of which the *Indians* make good Belts. He has a very short Bob for a Tail. Mr. *Neal*, in his late History of this Country, speaking of the Moose, says they have a long Tail; but that Gentleman was imposed on, as to other things besides the Moose.

Our Hunters have found a Buck, or Stag-Moose, of fourteen Spans in height from the Withers, reckoning nine Inches to a Span; a quarter of his Venison weighed more than two hundred pounds. A few Years since, a Gentleman surprized one of these black Moose, in his Grounds within two miles of *Boston*; it proved a Doe or Hind of the fourth Year: After she was dead, they measured her upon the Ground, from the Nose to the Tail, between ten and eleven Feet, she wanted an Inch of seven Foot in height.

The Horns of the Moose, when full grown, are between four and five Foot from the Head to the Tip, and have seven Shoots or Branches to each Horn, and generally spread about six Foot. When the Horns come out of the Head, they are round, like the Horns of an Ox; about a Foot from the Head, they begin to grow a palm broad, and further up still wider, of which the *Indians* make good Ladles, that will hold a Pint. When a Moose goes through a Thicket, or under the Boughs of Trees, he lays his Horns back on his Neck, not only that he may make his way the easier, but to cover his Body from the Bruise

Bruise, or Scratch of the Wood. These mighty Horns are shed every Year. The Doe-Moose has none of these Horns.

A Moose does not spring, or rise in going, as an ordinary Deer, but shoves along side-ways, throwing out the Feet, much like a Horse in a racking pace. One of these large black Moose, in his common Walk, has been seen to step over a Gate, or Fence, 5 Foot high. After you unharbour a Moose, he will run a Course of 20, or 30 miles, before he turns about, or comes to a Bay ; when they are chased, they generally take to the Water ; the common Deer, for a short space, are swifter than a Moose, but then a Moose soon outwinds a Deer.

The Meat of a Moose is excellent Food, and tho' it be not so delicate as the common Venison, yet it is more substantial, and will bear salting : The Nose is look'd upon as a great Dainty ; I have eat several of them my self ; they are perfect Marrow. The *Indians* have told me, that they can travel three times as far after a Meal of Moose, as after any other Flesh of the Forest.

The Black Moose are not very gregarious, being rarely found above four or five together ; the young ones keep with the Dam a full Year.

A Moose calves every Year, and generally brings two. The Moose bring forth their young ones standing, and the young fall from the Dam upon their Feet. The time of their bringing forth is generally in the Month of *April*. See *Job* Cap. 39. V. 1, 2, 3. *Canst thou mark when the hinds do calve, or knowest thou the time when they bring forth ? They bow themselves, they bring forth their young ones, they cast forth their sorrows.*

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The Moose being very tall, and having short Necks, do not graze on the Ground, as the common Deer, Neat Cattel, &c. do, and if at any time they eat Grass, 'tis the top of that which grows very high, or on steep rising Ground. In the Summer they feed upon Plants, Herbs, and young Shrubs, that grow upon the Land, but mostly, and with greatest delight on Water-Plants, especially a sort of wild Colts-foot and Lilly, that abound in our Ponds, and by the sides of the Rivers, and for which the Moose will wade far and deep, and by the noise they make in the Water, our Hunters often discover them. In the Winter they live upon Browse, or the tops of Bushes and young Trees, and being very tall and strong, they will bend down a Tree as big as a Man's Leg, and where the Browse fails them, they will eat off the Bark of some sorts of Trees, as high as they can reach. They generally feed in the Night, and lie still in the Day.

The Skin of the Moose, when well dress'd, makes excellent Buff; the *Indians* make their Snow-shoes of them: Their way of dressing it, which is reckoned very good, is thus: After they have hair'd and grain'd the Hide, they make a Lather of the Moose's Brains in warm Water, and after they have soaked the Hide for some time, they stretch and supple it.